

THE LEISURE HOUR

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"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cooper.*



WALTER WILSON AT TINCROFT HOUSE.

WITHOUT INTENDING IT;

OR, JOHN TINCROFT, BACHELOR AND BENEDICT.

CHAPTER L.—"COALS OF FIRE."

WALTER WILSON was deplorably ill. After a day or two in London, taking the rest rendered absolutely necessary by a state of exhaustion into which he sunk on reaching the temporary lodgings provided for him—

which exhaustion was probably increased by the

sudden excitement caused by his meeting with John Tincroft and his cousin; and after another day or two partly spent in conferences with his lawyer,—he travelled by short stages to John's home. His daughter and Tincroft were his travelling companions, Sarah having gone on before to make all needful preparations.

Tincroft House was ready to receive the visitors, therefore; and the sick man was at once installed in his state apartments, while the wondering and half-

frightened little Australian bird, called Helen, had taken possession of her beautified bower.

All these arrangements were quietly submitted to, rather than actively acquiesced in and assisted, by Wilson, who was, in fact, too ill to make difficulties, if he had any to make, and who was glad enough to rest his shattered frame. As to Helen, she was with her father; and if her accommodations had been far less inviting, they would have been good enough, and only too good for her, she said. Nevertheless, she was impressed with their magnificence.

"If you had only seen my poor little room in our old log-house as I remember it at first," said she to Sarah.

By the way, Sarah's simple-heartedness had already found its way to the girl's feelings. "She isn't like my mother, not at all," Helen said to herself; "but then, nobody could be, or ever was, like dear mother"—and here her tears began to flow; "but Mrs. Tincroft is so good to me, and does everything she can think of for poor father, that I can't help liking her."

It was quite true that Walter Wilson had received, and was receiving, all the attention from both John and Sarah that could have been shown had he been a very dear brother. His apartments were studiously and carefully kept at an equable temperature; his table was supplied with all such delicacies as would be likely to tempt a sick man's appetite, or to create it. The best medical advice in Trotbury had been invoked on his behalf, and the doctor visited him every day.

Helen was with her father the greater part of the day, reading to him if he could bear it, and silently waiting on him when his nerves were unstrung, and his distressing paroxysms of weakness came on.

The establishment at Tincroft House was enlarged now by the addition of another female domestic; and more frequent calls were made at its gates by that benevolent race who delight to supply, and even to anticipate and forestall, the animal requirements of their fellows. No doubt, the wants were even now moderate enough; but, excepting when a Grigson or two, or a small flock of the species, as the case might be, had alighted on the premises for a few days, "there had never been such goings on at Tincroft House"—as the village grocer said to the village butcher—"any time within the last twenty years." "And that's ever since the place has been inhabited in the memory of man," responded the purveyor of beef and mutton.

There never had been such good times at Tincroft House, in John's memory, at least, as were now inaugurated. It had come at last. He had striven for it, and patiently waited for it; and it had come. And he never felt more secure in the affection and entire confidence of his Sarah than when he saw her tenderly watching over the sick man, once her lover.

And so time passed on. A long, dreary winter was succeeded by the premonitions of spring. Crocuses and snowdrops and hepaticas pushed themselves out of the ground, in the flower-garden beneath the young Helen's window; and, with the returning milder weather, the more distressing symptoms of Wilson's disorder somewhat abated. Not that it was believed he would recover, or even, for any length of time, rally. That he was slowly dying he himself knew, and all around him knew it; but still, his strength for a time increased. He had even ventured occasionally, when the midday sun shone out,

to walk—well wrapped up—on the dry gravel paths of the flower garden, leaning his feeble frame on John's arm.

On one of these occasions the invalid halted in his slow progress, and turned to his supporter:—

"In all the time I have been here, and living at your cost—I and my Helen—we have never spoken a word about money matters," said he, breathing hard.

"Really," replied John, "I don't know what there is to say, Walter" (for John had learned to call his guest by his familiar name). "All I can say is that you are heartily welcome to the small accommodation we have been able to provide for you. I only wish it had been larger."

"That is all very well, and I am sure you mean what you say, Mr. Tincroft; but we ought to be coming to an understanding. I don't want to be living at free cost. I can afford to pay for what we eat and drink, I hope."

"I have no doubt of it, my friend; but we will not discuss that question now," rejoined John; "there will be time enough for that another day. But there is something I have been thinking about. May I mention it?"

"If it is not very unpleasant," said Wilson, with a faint laugh.

"I hope it will not be, I am sure it should not be," said John, and then after a little while, he went on,—

"Do you know, Walter, what has been my greatest drawback—what I most of all regret in my life's history, looking back upon it as I do now?"

Wilson did not know—could not guess, as he looked inquiringly into his host's countenance.

"I never knew my parents," said John, speaking slowly. "My mother died when I was an infant; my father, when I was a mere child. I was thus thrown upon the tender mercies of strangers; and that made me—but I won't speak about that. What I mean is—I have been thinking, Wilson, that you have a father and mother—brothers and sisters too, all living in England."

"I suppose I have," said the other, rather haughtily, as it seemed to John, who went on, nevertheless.

"You have never written to them since you came back from Australia, I think?" John continued.

"No, nor for a long time before, if the truth were known."

"I am afraid you are not quite good friends with them?" said John.

"Possible," said Walter, curtly; "I was not over and above pleased with what they did between us two and another, years ago," he added.

"But that is past and gone. And, after all, though it was a mistake on their part, it may have turned out for the best, you know," said John, in his simplicity, which, after all, was better than some men's cunning. "If such and such events hadn't happened, others would have come to pass which would have brought their share of trouble, I dare say. And, as it was, you have enjoyed much happiness and some prosperity in life, although not in the way you first thought of."

"And am come back to die," said the other, sadly.

"And death is the portal of life—the entrance into it, if we could but see it so," rejoined Tincroft. "But I was speaking of your parents and your old

home. Don't you think you ought to let bygones be bygones, and make it up with them?"

"Do you think so, Mr. Tincroft?"

"I do think so," said John. "I am quite sure that it will be one of the happiest days of your life when you can feel that you have forgiven, from your heart, the trespasses which men have trespassed against you."

"Ah! and how do you know that?" demanded Wilson, quickly.

"By having tried it, Walter," said John, meekly.

The conversation, broken and disjointed as it was, and imperfectly as it has been reported, did not terminate here; but it took another turn. But as this bore upon matters which do not immediately concern our history, it may be omitted here. It is enough to say that, a few days afterwards, Wilson renewed the former subject.

"I have been thinking over what you said, and I think I ought not to keep up my bad feelings. I mean to write home and offer to be friends."

"I am glad you do think and mean so," said John, dubiously.

"Of course, I shall expect some acknowledgment," added Wilson.

"Ah! I was afraid of that. If I were you I wouldn't make that a condition."

"Wouldn't you, though, really?"

"No. Only think a little, Walter."

"I have thought. And all I can make of it is that they used me badly—father, mother, Elizabeth, and all. And you came in for your share of it, Mr. Tincroft, and Cousin Sarah, she did too. And it seems to me that it is only right that they should make some sort of acknowledgment, as I said a minute ago."

"I would not insist upon it, Walter," said John, and he repeated, in the same tone as before, the same words, "Only think a little."

"I have very little power of thought left," said Walter, with a heavy sigh. "You must help me. What would you have me think?" he asked.

"Think of what our dear Lord said," replied John, gently and lovingly, "when he taught us to pray, 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us.'"

It was in the early twilight of evening when, as the two sat together, these words were spoken, and before either spoke again the twilight had deepened into darkness.

CHAPTER LI.—HIGH AND LOW BEECH.

The families at High and Low Beech continued to prosper, after a fashion: that is to say, they worked hard, lived frugally for the most part, and made some money.

Matthew Wilson was an old man now. He was not young when we first made his acquaintance, and add twenty years or more to fifty and a little over, and we arrive at the threescore and ten, or going on for fourscore, in which not much remains of the fag-end of human life.

Not that Matthew thought much of this. He was strong and hearty, he said. His teeth were sound, some of them at any rate; and he could stomp about his farm as well, pretty near, as he had done any time in the last ten years. He was not made of such stuff as the young people of modern days; he was born before nerves came in fashion; he hadn't given

in to bad habits like some—not he. He didn't go to public-houses as his brother Mark had done; and he didn't go about with a dirty pipe in his mouth all day long, as some others did that he could name, but he wouldn't. And about that nasty tobacco, it was his opinion that it was taking all the manliness out of people nowadays. Look at horses, they never smoked, the same with cows and sheep; and even hogs, though they did sometimes run about with straws in their mouths—but that was only when rough weather was coming—they didn't set a light to the ends and smoke them. They were a deal too knowing for that.

All this, or something very much like it, and a great deal more of the same sort, Matthew Wilson was in the habit of gravely going over with any old crony whom he could get to listen to him. And lacking this, he could propound it at his own fireside on a winter's evening, his wife and his daughter being now his principal listeners there.

For his sons had, years before, all flitted from under the parental roof-tree. George, the next eldest to Walter, was, as our readers may remember, married some twenty years before, and had settled on poor Mark's late holding at High Beech. There he still remained, with a large family growing up around him; but holding no intercourse (or very little, and that not of the pleasantest complexion) with his father and other members of his family. The truth is, George was charged, with how much or how little truth it does not concern us to know, with having, in some family dealings, been too sharp by half. Now, Matthew liked sharpness well enough in general, and was always sufficiently disposed to sneer at and run down any one who, in his opinion, was deficient in that admirable qualification for getting on in the world, according to his view. But it is one thing to admire sharpness when practised on Number Two, and quite another thing to approve of it when it is brought home to Number One. And so, having been outwitted, as he imagined, by his son George, Matthew Wilson was too much in the habit of pouring out vials of wrath when the occupant of High Beech was mentioned. "Brother Mark was bad enough," said the old farmer; "and I lost a good five hundred by him; but I don't know if George isn't the worst of the two—and he my own boy."

Now, I am not at all sure that Matthew had any real ground of complaint against his "own boy." At the best of times, perhaps, the old farmer had been an avaricious man; and it is notorious that the vice of avarice grows as age advances. No doubt it is true that as we brought nothing with us into the world, so it is certain we can carry nothing out of it. But there is as little doubt that we (not you and I, reader, who don't love money at all, but I at this present moment identify myself with those who do) like to retain our hold of what we have got as long as we can, and to increase it if it lies in our power. So, I dare say, Matthew Wilson was altogether under a mistake concerning George's too great sharpness. Nevertheless, George lay under the stigma.

As to Alfred and James, they had stuck to the farming, as they had always said they would do: and had managed by this time to have farms of their own—wives and children also, no doubt. But as our history has not hitherto concerned itself about these scions of the Wilson stock, we may take short notice of them here.

The mother of these young men plodded on by her

husband's side on the down-hill of life, not altogether without her troubles and vexations. Among these minor miseries of human existence was the completest conviction, amounting to certainty, that servant-girls were good for nothing, that education had ruined them out and out, that all the learning people of that sort needed to be taught, if it didn't come by nature, was to know how to wash, and brew, and bake, and scour, and scrub, and milk cows, and churn, and so forth, from morning to night. If they wanted anything else, by way of recreation, hadn't they got their clothes to mend and their stockings to darn? If they wanted any teaching of another sort, they could go to church on Sundays, when their mistresses could spare them, and get it there. As to their sitting down, Sundays or work-a-days, with a book in their hands, as they were let to do in some houses (not in hers, she was thankful to say), she hadn't patience with it. But she knew what would come of it: mistresses would soon be maids, and maids mistresses. She only hoped the world would last out her time.

I should explain that this somewhat violent philippic was called forth on one particular occasion, when a Sunday school was started in the village by the successor of our venerable friend Mr. Rubric. For this worthy gentlemen (who was aged when we first made his acquaintance) had departed this life some three or four years before the time in our history at which we have arrived. Another had entered on the scene of his labours, a younger man, and with a good many whims (I am using Mrs. Matthew's expression, "a good many whims") in his brain, among which was the very old one that "for the soul to be without knowledge is not good." Now, Mr. Rubric had held the same opinion, and had taught the people sound doctrine in his weekly ministration and his frequent visitations; and also in his careful supervision of the village national school; but he had not ventured so far as to "set up a Sunday school" (Mrs. Matthew's phrase again, not mine). And this was going so far in advance of that good lady's ideas that she could not, at first, restrain her indignation. Mr. Newcome was, no doubt, a good man in his way—he could not be otherwise, seeing he was in the Church—and he preached good sermons, no doubt, if folks could only understand them. But, for all that, give her back her dear old Mr. Rubric. Ah! there were no parsons like the old ones that were dying out, stock and branch. She didn't know whether the railroads that there was such a talk about had anything to do with it. She should not wonder if they had; and if they had, it was no more than was to be expected; and it was all the worse for them. They had enough to answer for—taking away people's lives as they were said to do—without having that!

Another sign of the degeneracy of the times, according to Mrs. Matthew, was that the cows didn't yield so much milk by half as they used to do; and that the milk, little as it was, did not produce so much cream; and that the cream didn't make such good butter as when she was young. Moreover, the best sorts of potatoes were dying out, and the potato disease was coming in, which was a sign the world was in, or approaching unto, its last stage of decrepitude (*not* Mrs. Matthew's expression); and all she could hope was that it would last her time.

Now, all these fancies were harmless enough, though rather tiresome, perhaps, in their re-re-

iteration. And if Mrs. Matthew had remembered a certain piece of advice given in an old book about not saying that the former days were better than the present, she might have modified her views. But she did not remember this, and as it probably afforded the good old lady some satisfaction to dwell upon these imaginary grievances, I do not know that you and I, friend, need find fault with her. *We* shall be old some day, if we live long enough; and then, perhaps, other story-tellers, now in their cradles, will be saying the same things of us.

Mrs. Matthew's troubles already mentioned were, after all, theoretical, and I am inclined to think she did not half believe in them herself. There was another nearer home which I shall only hint at, rather than dwell upon. Her daughter Elizabeth had become, more and more, a thorn in her side. Not that there was any positive unkindness of heart between the two; but there was much heart-burning at times. For one thing, the old farmer's wife had sometimes great difficulty in upholding her supreme authority at Low Beech, in all domestic affairs. And if it is true that two kings cannot sit upon the same throne, it is equally certain that a household does not get on at all times very amicably where there are two mistresses. And so there were times when near approaches were made to disruption, for Elizabeth, as we have seen, was warm-tempered, and she declared, again and again, that she would go out to service, *that* she would, rather than be so put upon at home, and be looked upon as nothing and nobody. And though these passages of arms, or rather of tongue, ended in each party cooling down for the time, the burning discontent remained, ready to break out again on sufficient, or insufficient, occasion.

The truth, perhaps, is that the daughter's temper had not improved with her years, which my readers may reckon up with some approach to accuracy; and with the decrease of the hope which is said to have a place in every gentle bosom. Since the disappointment of that hope, of which I have told, no other admiring swain had ventured the offer of an arm in a country walk, or had breathed a sigh at the shrine of Elizabeth's beauty. Ah, well-a-day! And so the world goes round and round, and "that which hath been, is now: and that which is to be, hath already been."

CHAPTER LII.—HOW WILL IT END?

THERE was one subject which, as I have already told, always produced discord at Low Beech Farm, when touched upon. And there was another so closely bordering upon it, that it had been almost dropped in conversation. This was the question, "What had become of Walter?" Eventually, it came to be generally concluded that Walter was dead, or something would have been heard of him. To this conclusion the old folks at Low Beech had settled down; and though the supposititious death of the first-born was felt by them as a kind of trouble, it was nevertheless borne with a degree of composure which perhaps did not very much surprise those who were most intimately acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Wilson—or would not have done had they remembered that where the love of money is the supreme affection, all other natural feelings are inevitably deadened.

Of course it was very wrong in Walter not to write

home in all the years of his growing prosperity in Australia. But he is not the first man, nor will he be the last, who, having, under either real or fancied grievances, hastily cut the tie which bound him to the family circle, has felt it a matter of selfish pride, or some other bad feeling, to widen the breach thus made by haughty and obstinate silence.

This, Walter had done; and now, in his sorrowful bereavement and personal affliction, he felt a strange reluctance to renew his intercourse with them.

"I dare say they think me to be dead, as I soon shall be," said he to Tincroft on the day after the conversation we have recorded in the last chapter; "and I don't know why I should disturb their thoughts."

But John wouldn't suffer the subject to drop. "You promised me you would write to them," said he, persuasively. "And I would if I were you."

And though nothing came of it that day, nor the next, nor for many nexts, the perpetual dropping of Tincroft's soft words and hard arguments at length wore into the hard stone of his friend's unwillingness.

"I tell you what I have been thinking, Mr. Tincroft," said he, one day, as they were together. "I feel stronger now than I did, and instead of writing, I'll go and see father and the rest while I'm able; that will be better than writing."

"Perhaps it will," said John. "I am inclined to think that it only needs for you all to be brought together again, to wipe out anything of the past unpleasant to think about. And writing might stir up these remembrances."

"But you must go with me, Mr. Tincroft."

"Yes, if you wish it," said John, hesitatingly. "But would it not be better if you and your daughter were to see them first of all alone? I would travel with you, of course, if you wish it."

"I shall not take Helen with me," said Wilson. "They mightn't take to her; or she mightn't take to them. No! if you will go and help me through with it, well and good. If not, it must drop."

"Oh! it mustn't drop," said John, cheerily.

It might be a week or more after this conversation that as the small family at Low Beech Farm were seated at their midday meal, in the large stone-floored kitchen, a single gentle, not to say timid, knock was heard at the outer door of the adjoining hall or passage.

"Go and see who it is, Martha?" said the old farmer to the servant-of-all-work, who sat at the same table with her master and mistresses, and drank her portion from the same general pewter pot which served for all dinner purposes: "one of those travelling tinkers, I guess; I saw old Ripley about yesterday. They're none too honest, I think, and their room is better than their company."

While thus discharging himself of his grumble, Martha had opened the door, and before she had recovered her surprise, the two strangers whom she had admitted slowly by her, and softly entered the kitchen.

They were a singular and yet not ill-assorted pair. One of them was a gentleman—rather lean visaged and pale in complexion, partially bald, and what hair he had inclining to grey. There was a kindly, half-pitying, half-inquiring glance in his dark grey eyes—that is to say, if the eyes expressed what was then uppermost in his mind. He was well dressed, though plainly, in black.

The other stranger, who, like him, had entered

bare-headed, was leaning heavily on his friend's arm, for he was very feeble. His face was masked in a dark beard, which, however, did not altogether conceal the strong muscular working of his lips as he, more than once, vainly attempted to utter the word which would not come. His dress was warm, though of a rougher texture than that of his companion.

For one moment, the old farmer and his wife and daughter sat suddenly transfixed, as it seemed, with astonishment at the intrusion; and then a gleam of intelligence lighted up Matthew's countenance.

"Mr. Tincroft, if I am not mistaken?" said he, without any great emotion.

It needed only this to convey quick intelligence to the mother's bewildered thoughts. The transition from Tincroft to Sarah, and from Sarah to Walter, was natural enough, no doubt.

"And 'tis Walter come back again!" she cried, shrilly, as she hastily rose, to be saved from falling only by the intervention of Elizabeth's stout arm.

"'Tis Walter, sure enough!" said Matthew.

ASIATIC RHINOCEROSES.

II.

THE Asiatic rhinoceros is intermediate in some respects to the one-horned and to the ordinary two-horned African species. Its more immediate congeners have long ceased to exist, and are known only from their fossil remains. It is comparatively a small animal, which never much exceeds four feet in height; but its horns attain a beautiful development, more especially the anterior one, which is much longer than the other, and has a graceful curvature backward, which is more or less decided in different individuals; the other, or posterior horn, is not placed contiguously to the first, as in all of the African species, but at a considerable distance from it, and it has a corresponding backward curvature. An anterior horn in the British Museum, which is very highly curved, measures thirty-two inches along its front, and is seventeen inches in span from base to tip. The writer has seen a pair of well-developed horns of this rhinoceros, beautifully carved and polished, and set with their bases upwards and on a parallel, in a carved black wooden stand, similar to those upon which Chinese metallic mirrors are mounted; and the Chinamen give such extravagant prices for fine specimens, that they are exceedingly difficult to get hold of, and hence their excessive rarity in museums. It may be mentioned that natives of the southern provinces of China have settled in great numbers in the countries lying eastward of the Bay of Bengal, or what are known as the Indo-Chinese and Malayan countries, and have largely intermarried with the women of that extensive region.

The hide of the Asiatic two-horned rhinoceros is rough, but not thick or hard, being easily cut through with a knife; where thickest it does not exceed one-third of an inch, or a quarter of an inch on the belly; it is of a brownish ash-colour, and is somewhat thinly (or not very densely), though conspicuously, covered with short and coarsish black hairs throughout. There are folds about the neck, a distinct fold behind the fore-quarters, a slight fold, or rather crease, on the flanks anterior to the hind limbs, and another slight fold some distance above

the hock; but nothing comparable to the "plates of mail" of the two single-horned species. Inside of the folds the skin is of a sullied flesh-colour. The short crease on the flanks anterior to the hind limbs is equally seen in the African rhinoceros at this time in the Regent's Park collection; but the strong fold posterior to the shoulders is peculiar to the three Asiatic species. The form of the skull in *R. sumatranus* approximates that of certain of the extinct rhinoceroses, which were also two-horned; and the huge northern *R. trichorhinus* is known to have been thickly clad with woolly hair, indicative of its frigid habitat. The coarse hair of *R. sumatranus* is more like that of any true buffalo. There is a stuffed specimen of *R. sumatranus* in the British Museum, which is in a glazed case by itself, on the landing-place at the top of the flight of stairs at the farther end of the bird gallery. It is about full-grown; but the horns are not much developed.

This animal inhabits Borneo as well as Sumatra, but not Java. It occurs likewise in the Malayan Peninsula, and would appear to be extensively diffused in the Indo-Chinese countries. Most probably it is that noticed by Duthalde as inhabiting the province of Quang-si, in China, in latitude 15 deg. One was captured not long ago in Chittagong (at the head of the Bay of Bengal, on its eastern side); and the writer has been assured by a European planter, who saw the two horns attached to the skin of the head, of one that had been killed in Assam, where it was regarded as an exceedingly great rarity; but he doubtless meant that it had been killed in one of the hill ranges bordering the valley of the Brahmaputra, to the south of the great bend of that river. Like *R. sondaicus*, it ascends the jungle-clad mountains to their very summits, but is chiefly found in dense masses of reeds and high "elephant-grass," where it is occasionally killed by means of a heavy falling stake set by the natives in its path.

Dr. Mason, an American missionary, in his work entitled "Burmah," remarks that "the common single-horned rhinoceros is very abundant; the double-horned is not uncommon in the southern provinces." And then he alludes to the alleged "fire-eater" of the Burmans, supposing that to be *R. sondaicus*, as distinguished from "the common single-horned" kind, which he erroneously thought was *R. indicus*. "The fire-eating rhinoceros," he tells us, "is so called from its attacking the night-fires of travellers, scattering the burning embers, and doing other mischief, being attracted by unusual noises, instead of fleeing from them as most wild animals do." Now the camp-fire of Professor Oldham (the director of the Indian Geological Survey) was attacked by a rhinoceros, which he fired at with a two-ounce ball; and three days afterwards the body was found, and proved to be *R. sumatranus*. The skull of that individual is now in the museum of Trinity College, Dublin. The commonest of the three African rhinoceroses (that now represented by a specimen in the London Zoological Gardens) has been known to manifest the same propensity, and so has even the ordinary American tapir. For the most part, however, the Asiatic two-horned rhinoceros is an exceedingly shy and timid animal; and Sir T. Stamford Raffles remarks of it, in the island from which it takes its name, that "they are not bold, and one of the largest size has been seen to run away from a single wild dog" (so-called,

the *Canis rutilans* of the Malay countries). In the Malayan Peninsula, the late Dr. T. Cantor mentions it as "frequenting only the densest and most inaccessible jungles."

Our readers will probably be amused by the account of the capture (as before mentioned) of a rhinoceros of this two-horned species in Chittagong. It appears that some natives came into the station and reported that a rhinoceros had been found by them in a quicksand, being quite exhausted with its efforts to release itself. They had attached two ropes to the animal's neck, and, with the assistance of about two hundred men, dragged her out, and keeping her taut between the two ropes, they eventually made her fast to a tree. The next morning, however, they found the animal so much refreshed, and making such violent efforts to free herself, that they were frightened, and made application to the magistrate of Chittagong for protection. The same evening Captain Hood and Mr. H. W. Wickes started with eight elephants to secure the prize, and, after a march of about sixteen hours to the south of Chittagong, they came up with the animal. "She was then discovered to be a Sumatran or Asiatic two-horned rhinoceros, rather more than four feet in height, with a smooth hairy skin somewhat like that of a pig, and with two horns—one up high, almost between the eyes, and small; the other rather larger, and just above the nose—and the upper lip almost coming to a point, and protruding a little. The elephants at first sight of the rhinoceros were very much afraid, and bolted one and all; but after some little exertion they were brought back, and made to stand by. A rope was now with some trouble attached to the animal's hind leg, and secured to an elephant. At this juncture the rhinoceros roared, the elephant again bolted, and had it not been for the rope slipping from the leg of the rhinoceros, that limb might have been pulled from the body. The rhinoceros was, however, eventually secured with ropes between elephants, and marched into Chittagong in perfect health. Two large rivers had to be crossed—firstly, the Sungoo River, where the animal was towed between elephants, for she could not swim, and could only just keep her head above water by paddling with the fore feet like a pig; and secondly, the Kurnafuli River, where the ordinary ferry-boat was used. Thousands of natives thronged the march, which occupied a few days; the temporary bamboo bridges on the government road invariably falling in from the numbers collected thereon to watch the rhinoceros crossing the stream below, and sometimes the procession was at least a mile in length. The 'Begum,' as the rhinoceros has been named, is now free from all ropes, and kept within a stockade inclosure, having therein a good bath excavated in the ground, and a comfortable covered shed attached. She is already very tame, and will take plantain leaves or *chopattis* (in Australia called 'dampers') from the hand, and she might almost be led about by a string."

Since this was written "Begum" has made her appearance at the Zoological Gardens in Regent's Park, and we borrow part of Mr. Frank Buckland's characteristic report of her condition in her new quarters:—" 'Begum' has an ancient and antediluvian look about her, and very likely the old English *Rhinoceros trichorhinus*, whose bones my father discovered in the celebrated hyæna cave in Kirkdale, in

Yorkshire, had the same kind of phiz. Her face is covered with wrinkles. There is a great 'crow's foot' on her cheek, and deep wrinkles round her eyes, so that she has somewhat the appearance of a very aged disagreeable old man. She has also the peculiarity of shutting her lower eyelid instead of the upper, when she wants to take 'forty winks.' Although called the Sumatran rhinoceros, 'Begum' was caught near Chittagong, and was partly led and partly driven, with ropes round her legs, like a pig going to market, all the way through the jungle from that place to the river, a task which does Mr. Jamrach much credit. She travelled best at night, and would then follow her keeper, who walked in front with a lighted lantern kept close to the ground. The guide used to sing to her at night as she trotted along, and the natives joined in chorus. In the streets of Calcutta she lay down like a sulky pig, and they had to wet the road so as to make it semi-mud and drag her along bodily. She was shipped on board the steamer 'Petersburg' at Calcutta and brought direct to the Millwall Docks in a gigantic cage made of teak. The transfer of this valuable animal—for she cost more than £1,000—from her travelling box to the elephant house along the path was effected by Mr. Bartlett with his usual ability and tact. He was, of course, assisted by Mr. Jamrach, who knew the habits of the animal well. She had to walk comparatively loose some sixty or eighty yards."

In *Rhinoceros sumatranus* the lower lip is broad and square, as in the single-horned species; whereas in one of the two African sections of the genus (as seen in the animal now in London) the lower lip is quite of another shape—narrow, and tending to a

point, being moreover much less coarse and more sensitive. With the exception of the huge *R. simus*, or "white rhinoceros" of travellers in Africa, which is the most gigantic of them all, the upper lip is somewhat elongated and highly prehensile. In *R. simus* it is flat and not prehensile. Accordingly this animal is a grazer, whilst the others are browsers. All of the African species have a nude skin without folds, comparable to that of the hippopotami. They are usually mentioned by travellers as the "white" and the "black" rhinoceroses, the former being much paler in its colouring. There are, however, two "black" species, one (*R. Keitloa*) considerably larger than the other (*R. africanus*), and having a much longer posterior horn, which in shape is very much flattened laterally or compressed. The great "white rhinoceros" has the fore horn exceedingly long and the hind one very short, and in old animals the former hangs much over to the front. A rudimentary horn in the centre of the forehead has been observed in at least three of the species, such as may now be remarked in the old female of *R. indicus* in the Regent's Park collection. In one of her occasional paroxysms of fury this animal contrived to knock off her frontal hornlet, and profuse bleeding ensued. Another has since been developed in its place. A clever operation was performed by Mr. Bartlett, superintendent of the Zoological Gardens, this spring. The front horn of the Indian rhinoceros had become bent and diseased. Mr. Bartlett amputated this horn with a sharp saw, and this without the least injury or inconvenience to the animal. The portion of horn cut off weighed $8\frac{1}{2}$ lb., and the "old gal" looks quite young again."

CHILDREN OF THE OLDEN TIME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A TRAP TO CATCH A SUNBEAM."

II.

In olden days it was quite a fashion to have a pet monkey. There is a picture of Queen Catherine of Arragon, first wife of Henry VIII, with a monkey on her arm. One of these animals might have altered the History of England, which I shall tell you about in its proper place.

One excellent thing formed part of the education of young ladies in these early days, which was the nursing and doctoring of the sick. Medical herbs were grown in every garden, and the girls dried and made them up into medicine for use. Besides these useful plants the ladies loved all fair flowers, and one of their favourite occupations was growing and tending them.

The houses at this period were so small and inconvenient, and so dark, that they were glad to pass as much time as possible out of doors, and we hear of them dining, dancing, singing, and playing at chess in the garden. There is an amusing old Latin story told which confirms this fact. A gentleman one day having invited some friends to dinner, set out the repast in the garden by the river side. Now he was afflicted with a wife who had a very cross, perverse temper, and when her husband's guests arrived she happened to be in a more than usual bad temper, and looked so very cross, that at last her husband asked her to put on a better face

and come nearer the table; but, with her contrary temper, she only moved farther back. He repeated his order, which so increased her ill-humour, that with an angry movement she pushed her chair back still farther, and fell into the water, which in her anger she had forgotten was so near, and she was drowned. The husband, pretending great sorrow, got into a boat to search for the body; but the astonished guests, seeing him go up the stream, not down, called to him to suggest a different course. "Ah!" answered the man, "you did not know my wife; she did everything in contradiction, so I believe her body has floated against the current, not with it."

A MS. of the fourteenth century gives an illustration of ladies amusing themselves in their gardens, by weaving chaplets and garlands, and some of them look like the "regrets" which it is the pretty custom in England, as well as abroad, to place on the last resting-place of our friends.

Young men and maidens wore wreaths of flowers on their heads, and garlands of flowers were rewards for success in games. Roses, lilies, and violets are all spoken of, and many of our common garden flowers now were known to the Anglo-Saxons. In this mediæval period amongst the favourite fruits the cherry seems to account the highest, and it was

the custom to have cherry fairs or feasts in the cherry orchards, when the fruit was ripe. We may fancy troops of children, in the dresses which seem so strange to us now, going with their mothers to one of these feasts; the girls with their long hair down their backs, in the style which has been worn so much by our children lately, bound by fillets of gold or silk, or still prettier, the chaplets of flowers they loved to make.



LADIES MAKING GARLANDS.

The early rising in summer, and the hours for meals, form a marked contrast to present habits. They rose before six o'clock, their breakfast hour was an uncertain one, but the dinner hour was *nine*! or ten o'clock in the morning, and the supper at five. The reason probably of these very early hours was the difficulty of lighting, candles and lamps being too expensive to be used in profusion. I presume the children took their meals with their parents. There is no account of "night and day nurseries," where children sleep, feed, and play as now, and I think it is a question how far our plan is better than the old one. There is no doubt that it is more convenient to the parents to have the little noisy rebels away in rooms devoted to their use, but it is a matter that admits of argument how far it is beneficial to the moral and physical culture of the child. Not that the example of their elders (one advantage to be derived now) would have been much use then as regards behaviour at table, for the following rules are addressed to grown-up ladies.

"In eating you must avoid much laughing or talking. If you eat with another (namely, in the same plate) turn the nicest piece to him, and do not go picking the finest and largest for yourself, which is not courteous; moreover, no one should eat greedily a piece that is too large, or too hot, for fear of being burnt or choked. Each time you drink wipe your mouth, that no grease may go into the wine, which is very unpleasant to the person who drinks after you. But when you wipe your mouth for drinking do not wipe your eyes or nose with the tablecloth, and avoid spitting from your mouth or greasing your hands too much." They spoke plainly in those days!

Young gentlemen and young ladies were sent to take service in the homes of persons of higher rank or wealth, where manners and accomplishments of gentlemen could be better learnt than at home. The young men waited at table and performed many

offices we should now call menial; but they shared in the amusements, and were instructed in the manly exercises, which was a sort of apprenticeship to knighthood. Girls in the same manner went to ladies of rank, and assisted in spinning, weaving, millinery, embroidery, and dressmaking; and I can imagine that the little children must have anxiously wondered to whom they should be sent when they were old enough, and have been very happy with young girls of their own age, thus cheerfully and usefully employed. To be a good servant was a gentlemanly and ladylike accomplishment, and payment was made in clothing or gifts rather than money.

At the period we have now arrived at, a feeling became general of the great necessity for education, and this showed itself in the founding of those universities of which English people are so justly proud. Reading and writing became now much more general, among the ladies more particularly. Tales, ballads, and songs had up to this period been told or sung; but now the great and wondrous art of printing, to which we are all so indebted, was discovered, and books began to multiply. In illuminations of the fifteenth century we find book-tables and book-cases forming part of the furniture. Happy children of this age can hardly, I suppose, imagine a time when there were no books, no delightful fairy tales, no "Boy's Own Book," no "Girl's Own Book," none of those gorgeous "toy books" which, with their well-executed coloured pictures, gladden the little bright eyes now—nothing but the horn-book, a kind of tablet from which they learnt their alphabet, without the pleasant and attractive modes of impressing it on their minds as those used nowadays.

They were not told that "A was an Archer and shot at a frog;" or that "A was an Apple Pie, which B bit and C cut," until long after this date. In our looking back to this "long ago," it is strange to notice how very little was done for children, and how unimportant they appear to have been thought. They were treated with the greatest severity by their parents and teachers, and there are instances of this in the correspondence of the family of a judge in 1454. In one letter it is stated that a poor young lady "since Easter has been beaten once in a week or twice, and sometimes twice in a day, and her head broken in two or three places." And this harshness and severity continued down to a late period, for Lady Jane Grey complains of "the nips and bobs and pinches" administered by her parents, and that she could never do anything to please them. The children appear to me to have worked more than played; but brighter times must have dawned for them when books began to be more general, and they could read for themselves again and again the legends and romances which their nurses had told them and the minstrels had sung them, as children love to do now.

Printing, some say, was discovered by one of those simple things which seem so trifling and yet on which often the greatest events turn. It seems that one Laurentius, a rich citizen of Haarlem, strolling in a wood near the city, amused himself by cutting letters on the bough of a beech-tree, and the thought struck him to take the impression off in ink to amuse his grandchildren; from this simple fact came all the countless books which from that age until now have been such a source of pleasure and instruction to old and young.

William Caxton, a citizen and mercer of London,

who was residing in Holland, heard of this discovery, and although by no means a young man, with singular industry and perseverance he set himself to learn the new art, with the object of introducing it into England. In 1471 he succeeded in printing a book by the desire of the Duchess of Burgundy, sister to Edward IV, called the "Recole of the History of Troy." He then came to England and set up a printing-press in the abbot's lodgings at Westminster, and there printed a book on the "Game of Chess." He lived till 1491, and printed nearly fifty volumes.

In one, called the "Mirror of the World," there is a most remarkable drawing, which appears to represent three or four unhappy people about to be



CHASTISEMENT THREATENED.

whipped; for a very severe-looking person in a chair has an instrument in his hand very much like a birch rod, and with the other one he appears to be beckoning to the culprits, who have fallen on their knees at some distance. It is singular to contrast this rude outline with the finished productions of the present day.

In an old ms. in the British Museum there is a curious picture from the story of Tobit. The lady at the fire cooking is no doubt his wife Anna, and the book in her lap appears to be a cookery book, which she is consulting, as such manuscript books had now (1470) become common.



TOBIT'S WIFE COOKING.

Perhaps at this time the rhymes which we call nursery rhymes, and which nearly all have some interesting origin, political or historical, were printed for the little ones. One which is, I believe, well known to our children, Mr. Halliwell, who has collected and published them, considers refers to the rebellious times of Richard II.

"My father he died, I cannot tell how;
But he left me six horses to drive out my plough.
With a wommy lo! wommy lo! Jack Straw, blazey boys!
Wommy lo! wommy lo! wob, wob, wob."

The verses are more numerous in the version which our children have now, relating how the man sold his six horses for a cow; how he sold the cow for a calf; the calf for a cat, and the cat for a mouse, who

carried fire in his tail and burnt down the house. The mouse is evidently the "Jack Straw, blazey boys," and the house probably John of Gaunt's palace, which the rioters burnt.

Another nursery rhyme, the same authority says, refers to Joanna of Castile, who visited the court of Henry VII, in 1506:—

"I had a little nut-tree, nothing would it bear
But a golden nutmeg and a silver pear.
The King of Spain's daughter came to visit me,
And all for the sake of my little nut-tree."

I do not know why Mr. Halliwell fancies it has reference to Joanna, or what the little nut-tree can be for the sake of which a king's daughter travelled from Spain to England, but Joanna of Castile did visit this country during the reign of Henry VII, and I suppose the lines can be traced back to that period. In their places I shall refer again to these familiar echoes of our childhood.

Though, as I have said, education was beginning at this time to be thought more of, the miseries, discomforts, and severities which attended scholars make it a cause of astonishment as well as admiration that there should have been so many who



CHILDREN, TIME OF HENRY VII.

attained any eminence. The names of Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Canova, Palissy, Salvator Rosa, Miranda—the latter of whom it is said at the age of eighteen was master of two-and-twenty languages—give proofs of talent unsurpassed in these brighter days. And yet the following description of a school before the Reformation is an example of the only help afforded in too many places* :—

"The school-house was the worst in the town, the walls and floors were filthy; wind and rain and snow beat in through the doorways and unglazed window spaces. The children were covered with vermin, and half naked. There were few books, and the scholar had frequently to write out his own copy. The Latin was monkish and barbarous; the grammar no better; the teacher often worse than either. There was no system, but a scramble for learning, where the strongest came off best. A lad was often twenty before he understood his grammar or could speak a word or two of such Latin as was then in vogue. The elder boys, or Bauhauten, tyrannised over the younger, or Schutzen, an elaborate and cruel system of 'fagging.' A Bauhaut would have three or four fags who begged or stole for him, though they were sometimes so hungry themselves that they would fight with the dogs for a bone.

* "The Boy makes the Man," by W. H. Davenport Adams.

"The Bauhaut claimed all their earnings, and compelled them to give up even what had been bestowed on them for their own use. Singing 'salves' and 'requiems,' whimpering false stories to the tradesmen's wives, thieving if there was a chance, sleeping in winter on the school hearth and in summer in the churchyard, 'like pigs in straw,' assisting at mass, chanting the *responsoria*, frozen in the cold churches till they were crippled, trying to get by heart a Latin syntax, and wandering vagabond-like from school to school, would sum up the life of thousands."

Compare this description with the schools provided for the young of this age; and yet in spite of these great difficulties men made themselves names which, while the world lasts, can never be forgotten.

Of the costume of children of this date a good idea may be formed from the engraving on the previous page. There are two German children (for the dress of the two nations was similar), and one younger, from a group supposed to be the children of Henry VII. Broad felt caps were worn by the men, with a profusion of parti-coloured plumes, projecting sideways; sometimes this large plumed cap was slung behind the back as an ornament and the head covered by a small cap of velvet or gold network. The dress of the ladies was not, in many points, unlike a fashion prevalent in 1848: large full sleeves, which were called at that later period "bishop's sleeves;" small waist; gowns cut square in the neck, as it is now again the fashion; with stomachers, belts, and buckles. The head-dresses were various; nets of gold, from beneath which the hair escaped and hung down the shoulders, were the prettiest, and might suit even very young girls.

The amusements still appear the same as in the preceding reigns—quintain, tilting at the ring, and

they were placed at some distance from each other, and drawn together suddenly by the strings affixed. I can imagine the amusement afforded to little boys by these toys, and how the sister's dolls might have been made to do duty as queen or princess to give the reward to the conquering knight when the joust was ended.

The picture here represents a boy mounted on a wooden horse, drawn by his companions, tilting at a miniature quintain. Whether the horse ever had a head or no does not appear, or perhaps the artist deemed it more natural to draw the wooden animal



PLAYING AT HORSES.

in the condition which it would probably be in after having been subjected to the tender mercies of two or three boys. There is another picture taken from a German woodcut, date 1549, in Mr. Wright's book, "Domestic Manners and Customs," which shows that the hobby-horse and whip were well known to the little ones of those days, and that the dress, with seemingly naked legs and feet, is the stage between the "swathing" I have before described, and the breeches. Leap frog, wrestling, sliding, skipping, nine-pins, skittles, marbles, and tops, are all mentioned as amusements of this age. The increase of books had made the English much greater readers, but writing does not appear to have made so much progress, for an anecdote in a letter of 1516 gives an account of some seditious paper having been stuck up on St. Paul's Church, and in order to discover who had written it the aldermen of London were ordered to go round all the wards and see "who could write."

In the reign of Henry VIII St. Paul's School was founded, and the building of Christ's Church in Oxford commenced by Wolsey; but when he was disgraced, the king seized the revenues with which poor Wolsey had endowed it, and finished the building, taking to himself the credit of founding it. The good young king who succeeded his father converted Christ's Hospital, which was an old religious house, into a school, and the dress the boys still wear is the facsimile of that worn by the citizens in the reign of Edward VI, with the addition of a small flat cap, which has been of late years discarded by the boys, who now in the wind and rain run about bareheaded.

PERSIA AS IT IS.

PERSIA having acquired a more than usual interest in Europe, on account of the terrible famine raging within her boundaries, a few facts regarding the present state of the country, the cause of its gradual



JOUSTING TOY.

football, jousting, etc.—but we find now a toy which must have pleased the little boys then as much as it probably would now. They were called jousting toys, and were models of knights in full armour, with their lances, manufactured in brass. There were four wheels to the stand on which they were placed, with a hole in front for the insertion of a cord; the man could be easily separated from the horse, and was so contrived as to be thrown backwards by a smart blow on the top of the shield or front of the helmet, and replaced again with much ease. Two of these toys were, of course, necessary to play with, and

decay, and the origin and consequences of the famine, may be acceptable. Those persons who have derived their knowledge of Persia only through Morier's interesting novels, Moore's "Lalla Rookh," or perchance the "Arabian Nights" and other works of fiction, will have formed erroneous ideas of Persia's wealth and prosperity which it will take hundreds of volumes to efface.

Modern Persia was at the height of her prosperity during the reigns of the Sefavieh kings—Abbas I, Sefi, and Abbas II. After the death of the latter (A.D. 1666) some dissensions arose between his sons regarding the succession. Sefi Mirza was victorious, and ascended the throne under the name of Shah Soleiman. During Soleiman's reign, which ended with his death A.D. 1694, the seeds of Persia's decay were sown. Shah Sultan Hussein, a man with no character whatever, and indolent to excess, succeeded Soleiman. He gave his government entirely up to effeminate eunuchs and bigoted syeds and priests. The nobility were kept out of all government appointments, the priests had the upper hand in the country, continual religious prosecutions took place, dissatisfaction with the government spread far and wide, and the general distracted and weak state of Persia invited neighbouring chieftains to invade the country at any opportune moment. The Afghan Mahmud soon took advantage of the state of the country, and entered it by way of Kerman, which he took, in the year 1720. A brave general was, however, at the head of the Persian troops which were sent against Mahmud, and the invader had to return to Afghanistan. In 1722 he again entered Persia, and this time was more successful. After besieging Ispahan, the then capital of Persia, for several months, during which the city suffered the worst forms of famine, Mahmud received the insignia of royalty from the hands of Shah Sultan Hussein himself, who had come to Mahmud's camp, clothed in mourning, to deliver himself into his enemy's hands. Shah Sultan Hussein formally abdicated in favour of Mahmud, was imprisoned, and a few years later brutally murdered by Mahmud's successor. In this invasion of the Afghans, who, wherever they went, acted with a savage ferocity similar to that of the first Mohammedan invaders of Persia in the middle of the seventh century, many flourishing towns were partly, some wholly, destroyed, all trades and business were abandoned by the affrighted people, and the prosperity of the country has never since revived to its state under Abbas I. After the Afghans, who enjoyed authority over Persia only eight years, Nadir Shah ruled over that country till 1747. The continuous wars in which that monarch engaged, impoverished the country more and more. After Nadir's death some of the chief families of Persia contended with each other for the possession of the throne. When the internal wars had lasted four years, Kerim Khan, of the Zend family, rose into power (1751), and a few years later he triumphed over his rivals and assumed sovereign authority over the now entirely ruined and distracted country. Kerim Khan had the weal of Persia at heart, but the country was too far gone in ruin to admit of any sensible improvement in the twenty years or so during which he reigned. Whatever Kerim Khan had succeeded in doing was undone by the civil wars which followed his death (1779), and which lasted fifteen years or more, till Agha Mohammed Shah, the first king of the now reigning dynasty, was freed from

his last and most troublesome rival, Lutf Ali Khan Zendi, in 1795. Since that time, excepting several wars with Russia, Persia has enjoyed comparative peace. During the reigns of Agha Mohammed Shah's successors, Futtah Ali, Mohammed, and Nasr ed din, the present king, the country was gradually recovering itself from the ruin into which it had fallen. Some cities had almost reacquired their former importance and flourishing state, the people were acquiring wealth, and had confidence in the government, and trade was actively progressing between Persia and other countries, when in the winter of 1867-8 took place the first drought.

Statistics regarding the population of a country like Persia are impossible. Different writers have variously stated the population to number from six to forty millions of inhabitants. Their statements may be true, or very far from it; it is impossible to say. A population of which nearly one-half are nomads, and a great number of the other half are hardly ever seen outside of their houses, cannot be correctly counted by any traveller or resident in the country. The Persian authorities neither keep registers of birth or death nor any public records whatever. "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof" they take in a literal sense, and whatever has happened to them, or their ancestors, belongs to the past, and is, as such, forgotten. Whatever may happen to them or their descendants is not to be thought of.

The government is despotic. The Shah is the government. His will is supreme, and against his veto there is no appeal. He is the "Shahinshah," the king of kings; his subjects the dust which he sweeps about at pleasure. He possesses the chief power, and therefore oppresses his subjects. Every one in the country, according to the adage, "Servant like master," oppresses his inferior, that is, the one who has less power. The people who suffer most are therefore those who possess least power, namely, the ryots, the men who work, the tradesmen, the husbandmen. Through the oppression of the government the ryots are discouraged, their work is made precarious and unprofitable, and work is in many cases neglected for indolence, and the easier way of earning a livelihood by begging or robbery. When a country loses its working members it cannot flourish. With a system such as exists with the present government deterioration is certain.

As to any statements regarding the revenue there is also no certainty. Everybody in Persia does his business with a view to cheating everybody else. A custom-house officer has orders from his immediate superior to take sixpence from every load of goods entering his district; he takes sevenpence, six for the superior, one for himself. The superior gives five-pence to the governor of the town, who gives four-pence to the governor of the province. Threepence is the lawful charge, fourpence had therefore been unlawfully taken from the ryot, and four government officials enriched at his expense. The governor of the province pays a certain amount yearly to the Shah for the benefits of "farming" the province. Anything which he makes above this sum is, of course, his own, as per contract, but when the Shah hears of too great a profit, he demands his share, and it is almost needless to say that whatever the Shah gets is entirely his own. He pays his necessary army and a few ministers, and with the rest of the money enjoys himself, keeps his palaces, hunting

seats, royal guards, several hundred women, some thousand horses, carriages, etc. When he makes any journey his subjects have to pay his expenses by extra taxes levied upon them; when it becomes necessary to move a regiment of soldiers, or an army corps, the same easy way of procuring money is pursued. The religion of Persia is the Shieh, a branch of the Mohammedan; it has been so since the year 1499, when Shah Ismail, the first Sefavieh, on ascending the throne, proclaimed that faith to be the religion of the country. The principal difference between the Shieh and the Sunni, the orthodox, sects is that the Shiehs execrate Abubekr, Omar, and Othman, Mohammed's three immediate successors to the Khalifut, as worse than infidels for having deprived Ali of his rightful succession, and venerate Mohammed's twelve immediate descendants as Imams. The Sunnis do not acknowledge these twelve Imams, most particularly not the twelfth, who, according to the Shieh belief, is alive, though invisible for the last ten centuries (he was born A.D. 869), as, according to Sunni doctrine, an Imam (spiritual head of the church) must be both alive and visible. The Sunnis also consider the Sunna, which are the accounts of the traditionary acts and sayings of Mohammed, collected from his wives and companions, of equal authority with the Koran. The Turks, Arabs, the Afghans, Indian Mohammedans, and others, are Sunnis.

Persia is in civilisation many centuries behind us. The great cause of the country remaining in such a backward state is the religion. Thousands of erudite writers have said so before, and others will say so as long as Mohammedanism exists. A Persian has great capabilities, but as long as he remains a Mussulman, that is a *true* believer, he can never be an educated man. As soon as he attains any education and some true knowledge of the sciences, he ceases to be a Mussulman, because everything he learns is in direct contradiction to what his prophet Mohammed taught. It has often been said that Mohammed created not only a religion, but everything else besides; or rather that he has made every science a matter of religion. This is true. One can hardly speak for half an hour with a Mussulman, that he does not say that what one is telling him is a lie, because it is not according to the Koran, the Sunna, or the Hadis (traditions). The Syeds (descendants of the prophet) and the mullahs, or priests, enjoy great power in the country. Their dicta go everywhere for laws which it would be folly and imprudence to argue against. They are mostly illiterate, bigoted men, and but too many of them are rogues. A man who has the title of Syed (a man may become a Syed by marrying a sister of the husband of a Syed's daughter!) expects others to support him. A mullah, because he can read and partly explain the Koran, thinks himself above manual labour, and will by most ingenious means swindle the public, and even his best friend, to gain a livelihood. These are the men who have the greatest influence among the people.

Trade and commerce are in Persia at the lowest ebb. The roads are bad, robbers abound all through the country, and the transport of merchandise is very expensive.

The principal produces of Persia are cotton, silk, opium, rice, wheat, barley, tobacco, and dates. All of these were in former years exported in great quantities; they are now barely sufficient for home consumption. Ghilan, Magenderan, and some of the

western parts of Persia contain forests; the other provinces are mostly devoid of trees, and present a melancholy and deserted appearance in consequence. Only in the gardens near towns and villages does one see trees, and even then only in small quantities. One finds in these gardens the Oriental plane, the sycamore, elm, poplar, willow, and sometimes, and only in the warmer provinces, the cypress; also the walnut, apple, cherry, fig, apricot, and plum trees; the pear is scarce in Persia, being only found in certain districts. In the southern parts of Persia, as the Mekran coast, part of Fars, and Laristan, the date palm is the principal tree; a little more north the plains and the mountain slopes are often covered with dwarf oaks, species of the zizyphus, the kornel, and bitter almonds. On the high roads, from forty miles north of Shiraz as far as Teheran, more than 500 miles, it would be no difficult labour to count the trees one sees; only small thorny plants (*onobrychis*, *artemisia*, *araphaxis*, *lagonychium*, *astragalus*, *salsola*, *tamarix gallica*, etc.) cover the bleak rocks and the often salty plains. From the north of Yezdikhast, as far as Teheran, the highest plants which I noticed in the plains were the dry three or four feet high stalks of the gum ammoniac plants (*Dorema ammoniacum*), and these are confined to only a small district between Yezdikhast and Mahyar, a distance of about sixty miles. In the low-lying provinces upon the banks of the Caspian Sea nearly every tree which one sees in European forests and gardens is to be met with; the finest fruits, the delicate mimosa, orange and lemon trees, vines, olives, all grow in that, to trees, favourable climate, in wild luxuriance.

Persia produces many gums and drugs; they are, however, of so little value, or found in such small quantities, as to have no influence on the commerce of the country.

Persia is very rich in minerals. Iron, copper, lead, antimony, and probably many other metals, are to be found in many places, but, as usual, the government is the cause of their remaining useless under ground. A person might pay heavily for the permission to mine for a certain metal, he might then spend another heavy sum in constructing his mine, but as soon as the mine began to give a profit on his outlay the government would seize all, and he would find he had spent his money in vain. Rocksalt, gypsum, and marble abound everywhere; coal is plentiful in the northern and western parts of Irak; sulphur, asphalt, and naphtha are found in many districts with hardly any trouble.

I shall now say a few words regarding the famine and its consequences. As I mentioned before, the first drought happened in the winter 1867-1868. The harvest of 1868 was in consequence very bad, and the prices of grain were doubled. The drought continued the next winter, and in 1869 the harvest was worse. The grain which had been stored from 1867, with the little realised by the 1869 harvest, was barely sufficient for the people; prices of wheat, barley, and bread became three times as much as they were in 1867. The next winter 1869-1870, again brought but very little rain and snow, and only half of the small quantity of grain which had been sown in the foregoing autumn came up. The famine then (1870) began. Landowners and masters, on account of the great losses they had suffered, now paid less wages to the men they employed, prices of food rose again, and men could hardly earn sufficient money to get

their living. The inhabitants of the villages, each an owner of perhaps one or two acres of ground, could in former years eke out a certain kind of existence by selling the proceeds of their little land. The continual drought took away their only means of subsistence, they were obliged to sell land, house, furniture, then their clothes, for bread, and at last, nothing to sell remaining, they died of hunger, or, becoming robbers, were caught and executed. The drought affected the rich people also. There are many noblemen now having neither food nor clothes who in 1867 were the possessors of vast expanses of arable land, of large mansions richly furnished, stables full of horses, crowds of retainers and servants, and large sums of ready money.

The winter of 1870-71 was like its predecessors. Only a little rain, just sufficient to revive the drooping hopes of the people, and then a sunny azure sky, glorying in the perpetual drought. During 1871 the famine was at its maximum. The prices of all articles of food had risen enormously. The poorer people, now out of work and having no property to sell, died in thousands. The number of people who died of starvation is incalculable, and can only be guessed at. The many letters, only in a few instances exaggerated, which have appeared at different times in English newspapers, have told enough of the horrible sights which were and are now daily to be seen in all towns of Persia. It will be needless to repeat their harrowing statements. Much has been said as to whether cannibalism had been resorted to in Yezd or not. I have had occasion to see a letter written by a well-known and trustworthy person at Yezd to his relative, a sheikh at Islam (a chief judge), in which more than seventy cases of cannibalism were vouched for! This statement has been corroborated by different people who had left Yezd on account of the famine, and whom I asked for information.

This winter (1871-72) plentiful rain has fallen, and the people, now only the well-to-do, who could manage to put some grain into the ground, have good hopes. Should the rain continue till the end of March, and the harvest be good, the famine will be at an end. In view of the favourable prospects the prices of food have fallen considerably, in some places more than half.

Some of the effects of the famine are the following. The country, already poor before 1867, has now become trebly so. Nobody has any confidence in the government, and dissatisfaction is expressed everywhere. The government did nothing to relieve the distress; only in the latter part of last year did the Shah give some ridiculously small sums to buy bread for the poor. The whole country now more than ever is infested with robbers. Many people who had lost their usual occupations have become footpads, others have joined some quasi-chieftain and become highway robbers, and bands of twenty to forty armed desperate men exist at present everywhere in Persia. In consequence of the many robbers nearly all trade and traffic of goods from place to place have stopped, and articles of importation, as tea, sugar, coffee, cotton goods, etc., are twice as dear as they used to be. The governors of districts now execute every thief they seize, even if he have stolen an article of only a shilling in value. Hundreds of once thriving villages are now totally deserted. Most of their inhabitants died of hunger, and their remains, many unburied, lie around their former homes. Those who

had some strength left went to other districts in search of food, and but too often also there died that worst of deaths—a death of starvation.

Once flourishing towns like Yezd, Meshed, Aberkuh, and Kazerun, are now almost depopulated. Kazerun, a town which three or four years ago numbered 15,000 inhabitants, now contains barely 2,000, and of that number half are destitute. The inhabitants of Bushire, Shiraz, Ispahan, and Teheran, suffered also very much. The numbers said to have died in those towns are almost incredible.

The drought has been so excessive that the bed of the River Zeinderud, on whose banks Ispahan lies, is now completely dry. Many of the small springs, of vital necessity to a country in which the rainfall is so small, are dried up, and should they not begin to flow again, great parts of the country will, in spite of rains during winter, remain dry and barren. The numbers of cattle, horses, mules, and asses, have decreased about fifty per cent. during the last few years on account of the scarcity of fodder. Many landowners, as they could not afford to feed their animals, sold their cattle at low prices to butchers, and left the horses, mules, and donkeys, wandering about in the plains, where they fell easy victims to beasts of prey.

Property, like houses or land, has now hardly any value. Arable land is sold in Persia per "mann of barley," that is, the extent of ground which a mann, six pounds, of barley, sown in the usual manner, will cover. In 1867 a mann cost five or six shillings; it now finds no purchasers at one shilling. Houses, including the ground they stand upon, are sold at a valuation of what the stones, of which they are built, will sell for. I have heard of instances of houses, including ground, of several rooms, offices, stabling, small garden, and a well with good water, being sold for seven and eight shillings. They cost, perhaps, £30 to build.

In conclusion, I shall state the prices of different articles as they were during the height of the famine, and as they were in the beginning of the 1867-1868 winter in the districts of Fārs lying between Shiraz and Bushire, a tract of country of about 10,000 square miles.

	In 1867.	During Famine.
Wheat per 6 lbs.	s. d. 0 3	s. d. 2 6
Barley do.	0 2	2 0
Wheaten Bread .. do.	0 2½	2 0
Acorns do.	No value	1 0
Seeds of different plants found in the plains .. do.	No value	1 0
Beef do.	0 5	1 3
Mutton do.	0 6	1 6
Rice do.	0 8	2 6
Milk do.	0 3	1 3
Butter do.	3 0	9 0
Dates do.	0 4	2 6
Fowls each.	0 3	{ Nominal value of 1s. 6d., but not to be found.
Pigeons do.	0 1	{ Nominal value 4d., but not to be found.
Partridges do.	0 1	Very scarce, 6d.
Eggs do.	0 0½	0 1
Straw per 6 lbs.	0 4	0 4½
Firewood do.	0 0½	0 1½

The above table, which I have compiled by calculating the average prices of the different commodities at several places, will show, without further comment, the effects of the famine.*

* We are indebted for this paper to an official resident in Persia.

A MIDLAND TOUR.

XIII.—CANNOCK CHASE—LICHFIELD

WE are now in the neighbourhood of Cannock Chase, a new mining district, abounding, as has recently been found, with excellent coal, which is greatly in demand for household purposes, and is finding its way to all parts of the country. It was long since proposed to establish there a central fortified camp, and, more lately, a great national arsenal. "For many years," says a recent writer on our national defences, "Woolwich has been the manufacturing arsenal of England. Why it should ever have been selected it is, nowadays, difficult to see. It has few or no recommendations, except proximity to London—which is in some respects a drawback—and its facilities for water-carriage to the outports. It is exposed to a sudden attack from an invader; and, Woolwich once lost, our power of manufacturing munitions of war in sufficient quantities would be irretrievably gone. The carriage of raw material thither is, out of all measure, expensive; wages are higher, owing to the neighbourhood of the metropolis, which increases the price of food; and facilities for the trial of guns are limited, in consequence of the density of population and the dampness of land. To remove the arsenal from Woolwich would, now that the dockyard there is almost silent, be to ruin the town; but this, it is argued, is a necessary evil, and the interests of particular localities, like that of particular individuals, must always succumb when opposed to the common welfare."

The Chase is an immense moor of more than 25,000 acres, taking its name from Cannock, an old village on its edge, known in the time of King John, and, some say, of Canute. Lord Hatherton, who has a seat—Teddlesley Park—in the neighbourhood, owns much of the property in and about it. As a fortified camp, the Chase has already been, theoretically at least, planned out, and being both central and elevated above the surrounding country, with hills here and there on which a complete girdle of forts could be built, seems peculiarly adapted for the purpose; as the site of a national arsenal, its advantages for security (lying 100 miles inland), as well as for convenience and ease of acquisition, are very highly esteemed. "In Cannock Chase," says the above-quoted writer, "all advantages are combined in a way that they are united nowhere else in England. The site is comparatively cheap; water is abundant; coal is below ground; iron is not far off; railways and canals cut the Chase at several points, and the South Staffordshire line runs right through the middle of it, thus easily connecting it with all parts of the kingdom; and there are villages dotting the vicinity, a small extension of which would afford housing for the mechanics and labourers who would be engaged in the arsenal. Eight or nine millions sterling would pay the whole cost of converting the Chase into the great central fortified arsenal of England; and we have no hesitation in saying that the economy in coal, iron, carriage, and wages, would recoup the whole sum in less than twenty years." But while its capabilities of becoming "the Metz of England, at once an impregnable arsenal, a manufacturing dépôt, a training camp, and a magazine," have been under discussion, the Chase has risen in value, and the rich veins of coal which have been found there have already done much to change it from a wild, neglected waste

into a great mining centre. Chase Town, a village six miles from Cannock, is a new settlement, deriving its existence from the coal-field, and remarkable for its rapid growth. Ten years ago the population was but 200, and scarcely a house could be seen; it is now about 2,000, with a gas company, post-office, etc. The prosperity of this part of the Chase owes its origin and increase to J. R. McClean, Esq., M.P., F.R.S., who, both as owner and engineer, has been intimately connected with many of the industrial enterprises of South Staffordshire for more than twenty-five years, has constructed canals, railways, water-works, etc., and has shown great energy and foresight in developing the resources of the district. Mr. McClean gives a great deal of employment, and through him more than £100,000 a year is paid in wages in Chase Town alone. Moreover, he has leased 2,000 acres of the Chase for agricultural purposes, nearly 1,000 acres of which are deeply ploughed, and 300 sown with potatoes and oats, and seem to promise very well. If coal, however, continues to be found, as it is most likely it will, and if the ironstone known to exist can be profitably worked, the whole Chase will probably in another twenty years be completely covered with important works. Already the Cannock and Rugeley Company have acquired a considerable tract of the waste towards Rugeley (about eight miles from Chase Town); but it is barely three or four years since this company commenced profitable operations, and they seem to have as yet only two shafts at work. Another company, the West Cannock, have leased a slice of the Chase, and are busily making preparations, but as yet have brought no coal into the market. Indeed, the investigations of our mining engineers point to a great extension of the coal-field westward. There are one or two minor collieries at or near Hednesford, a village about four miles from Chase Town, and two from Cannock.

The mines of Cannock Chase are worked differently from those of Dudley and West Bromwich. In the latter, as will be remembered, a "butty" takes the entire working of the mine; here each collier who wishes takes a piece or portion (employing others, if he likes, to help him), and gets out the coal from that particular part. Moreover, here two clerks are employed (one a company's or owners', the other a colliers'), to take an account of the deliveries and weights; and a mutual check is kept up, which is satisfactory to both parties. It may be added that the pitmen here are under strict discipline; they are paid fortnightly, on Fridays, have the Saturday following as a holiday, and appear in every respect to be well treated. And, as might have been expected, in the recent outcry for increase of wages the colliers of Cannock Chase were among the first to come to a good understanding with their masters.

Mr. McClean has built, endowed, and maintained, almost at his own sole cost, a church and Church schools for his people. The church, which was consecrated about five years since, is very handsome (within), has an excellent organ, and will accommodate about 800 persons; it is quite free, and no person who enters it is allowed to be asked for a penny. Hence it is the best attended church in the neighbourhood. The incumbent tells us that he

tries to make the services as bright and as hearty as possible, and that he has a surpliced choir, thirty in number, whose voices, however, are thought to be injuriously affected by their working "below;" that the church is occasionally well attended in the morning, and almost invariably in the evening; that there is a very good Church feeling; and that the great majority of the colliers—the bulk of the people—are civil, and willing to be instructed.* The average attendance at the Church schools is 300. The Dis-senters, too, have been very busy and zealous—indeed, they were earlier in the field than the Churchmen—and have built three chapels. One very great evil at Cannock Chase, however, is that there is no "big house," and no gentry near enough to give tone to, or to influence the people. The nearest good house is four miles off. Another and a crying evil is the number of public-houses and beershops. Much of the wages goes in drink. Some odious stuff, which seems to be refuse beer, "doctored," and known by the name of "clink," is sold so cheaply that it is said "a man can get drunk for twopence." Excessive drinking among men and women, and Saturday night dancing in the public-houses, seem to mark this place. There are sixteen public-houses and beershops in Chase Town, and a perfect cordon of them all round the parish. And with the increase of population the public-houses increase also. A Total Abstinence Society has recently been established; as yet, however, it has been able to do little towards stemming the great tide of intemperance.

Strange as it may at first sight seem, a flower show has not unsuccessfully been tried here, as a means of æsthetic culture. Both the attendance and the receipts were good. Beautiful thought! However rugged, however hard the nature, it may be touched and taught by flowers.

The population of Chase Town is to some extent migratory, flocking in annually when the coal trade is at its height, and leaving again in the summer. The shopkeepers and others run up badly built cottages, and to secure their rents allow them to be overcrowded with lodgers. A good building society is much wanted.

At Hednesford—an entirely new town—there is another church, much smaller than that of Chase Town, which it would seem owes its existence to a former incumbent of Cannock, and was consecrated about three years since; and towards the building of which Mr. McClean, who owns one of the collieries there, contributed £300, besides paying a handsome yearly sum towards the support of the clergyman. It is understood, however, that the principal expense is borne by the Cannock and Rugeley Colliery Company.

"For exploring the centre of the Chase," says the "Birmingham Saturday Half-Holiday Guide," "Hednesford is the best point. It is only about two miles to the edge of the Marquis of Anglesea's wild park of Beaudesert. Here is the Castle Ring, 784 feet above the sea, the highest point of the Chase and of South Staffordshire, commanding a wonderful view over the valley of the Trent. The summit of the hill is surrounded by an ancient entrenchment.

Numbers of deer are kept in Beaudesert Park, and black game may occasionally be put up in the heather. Hednesford Hills are a celebrated training-place for race-horses, and strings of the beautiful animals may generally be seen out at exercise. At any time a visit to the Chase in fine weather is interesting and delightful, but in July, when the heather is in blossom, the scene is one not soon to be forgotten. And you may walk three or four miles across the open and meet scarcely a human being, unless it be a stray gipsy or maker of heath brooms." Now and then you meet with a new village, now and then with a new mine; and some, at least, of the mines have all the advantages of the latest improvements in machinery, etc.

We are now within reach of Lichfield. With our memory full of the beauty of its cathedral (to which our course was directed, and where we lingered for some hours), and with many interesting recollections of its energetic missionary bishop, Dr. Selwyn,* and its much-loved Dean Champneys—its monuments, especially its "Sleeping Children"—and the Johnsonian relics in the city—I nevertheless yield the privilege of describing these to another writer, who has anticipated my design. Lichfield—a quiet little city, great in the annals of the Church of which its cathedral is the venerable and august representative, and the head-quarters of a diocese which trains and sends out into its populous parishes a host of hard-working clergy, and in which a system of lay agency has also been adopted that has already had the effect of securing the services of a large number of laymen as their fellow-workers—appears to be well provided with religious and educational advantages. It is the boyhood's home of Addison and Samuel Johnson, and now the home of several living men of literary fame—the abode also of one who, we are told, has perfected the application of compressed air as a motive power, an invention which it is expected will yet overthrow the mighty empire of Steam. Its population, which in 1861 was 6,893, in 1871 was 7,380,—and a direct line of rail will probably ere long be laid down thence to Birmingham, between which town and Lichfield the communication is at present very circuitous.

Few Englishmen, perhaps, will think of Lichfield without associating with it our great lexicographer; and some, as they think of its cathedral, will remember the eloquent words of Lord Mahon in his History of England—"If, then, it be asked who first in England at this period breasted the waves and stemmed the tide of infidelity—who, enlisting wit and eloquence, together with argument and learning, on the side of revealed religion, first turned the literary current in its favour, and mainly prepared the reaction which succeeded, that praise seems most justly to belong to Dr. Samuel Johnson. Religion was with him no mere lip service, nor cold formality; he was mindful of it in his social hours, as well as in his grave lucubrations; and he brought to it, not merely erudition such as few indeed possess, but the weight of the highest character, and the respect which even his enemies could not deny him. It may be said of him that, though not in orders, he did the Church

* As an indication of the kindly feeling which prevails among these rough people, we may mention that about a year since they subscribed £20 for a present to the churchwarden, six months afterwards collected among themselves £25 for a gift to their clergyman on his marriage, and soon after got up a concert and handed over the proceeds to the incumbent, for the poor.

* Dr. Selwyn has two "coadjutor bishops"—Bishop Abraham, formerly Bishop of Wellington (one of those four sees in New Zealand into which Bishop Selwyn succeeded in getting his great diocese divided), and Bishop Hobhouse—to aid him. These have no legal position or authority, as "suffragans" have, but are simply his curate-bishops—personal friends whom Bishop Selwyn has engaged to help him, and who are paid by himself.

of England better service than most of those who at that listless era ate her bread."

Many visitors to Lichfield have pleasing recollections of the musical festivals held in the cathedral, when the choirs are assembled from all parts of the diocese, and when to the solemn grandeur of the stately edifice are added crowds of living worshippers—subdued utterings, clear upliftings, of holy prayer—glorious bursts and strains of lofty song, and chaste and learned eloquence.

Archdeacon Moore, prebendary and precentor of the cathedral, has kindly furnished us with a tabular statement, from which we learn that at the first choral festival, in 1856, there were only twenty-six choirs present, and that at the last, in 1871, there were as many as seventy-five, with 1,374 singers.

Other festivals of the associated choirs have been held in various places in the diocese, in years when such festivals have not been held in the cathedral; and we learn from Dean Champneys that the association has rendered very great help to the "service of song" throughout the see; and that having himself gone into many parts of the same, he is able, from personal knowledge and observation, to testify to the correctness and precision with which the musical portion of the service has been rendered, and the good taste shown by the conductors of the parochial church choirs in the choice of their music, "which," he observes, "while it should give scope for good voices and good ears, should, at the same time, never destroy the liturgical character of the service, nor prevent the rest of the congregation from following the lead of the choir." The dean adds, in answer to my inquiry, "I have preached in many parts of the diocese, and have not heard bad music anywhere."

Varieties.

INTERNATIONAL PRONUNCIATION TABLE.—In six of the chief languages of Europe, there are at least 45 distinguishable sounds, expressed by letters or combinations of letters, 19 vowel sounds, and 26 consonant sounds; of these sounds the English use 40, the Germans 39, the French 35, the Portuguese 33, and the Italians and Spaniards but 32 each. The English alphabet giving only 5 vowels and 18 consonants for the expression of its 40 sounds, auxiliary symbols have to be formed in order to mark the 17 unrepresented sounds. The various sounds of the vowel A, for instance, cannot be gathered by a foreigner, though acquired by imitation in the gradual use of the language by children. To render all these 45 sounds intelligible for international study, Colonel Henry Clinton has compiled an elaborate and ingenious table and key, with symbols for each sound, and examples in the six chief continental languages.

THANKSGIVING DAY AND THE FRIENDS.—The "Friend," a journal of great respectability, supported by members of the Quaker community, had the following paragraph explaining the absence of Friends from the Thanksgiving Service in St. Paul's:—"We are informed that an invitation was sent to Friends (as to other Nonconformist bodies) from the Lord Chamberlain, inviting the society to send a deputation to the Thanksgiving Service in St. Paul's Cathedral on the 27th ult. At a special Meeting for Sufferings, convened to consider the subject, it was decided to decline the invitation. Friends very generally will no doubt concur in the view, that whatever liberty may be felt by individual Friends in such matters, it would have been far from right for the Meeting for Sufferings to commit the society to an official participation in a pre-arranged religious ceremonial." [This explanatory paragraph itself needs explanation, for which we are indebted to Mr. William Tallack:—"The term 'Meeting for Sufferings' is the name of the Standing Committee (Central) of the Society of Friends, which during 11½

months of the year, and except during the sittings of the yearly meeting in May, is the executive and supreme authority in and representative of the denomination. Its present title is simply a historic reminder of former troublous times 200 years ago, when its chief occupation was attention to and relief of the sufferings inflicted upon the Friends for non-compliance with the statutes relating to 'conventicles,' 'oaths of allegiance,' etc., etc., also for non-payment of tithes. All those sufferings have, for 200 years nearly, been diminishing, until they may be said to be merely memories of the past. A few Friends still suffer petty distrains for non-payment of tithes. But most of the Friends pay these where they are liable. The present duties of the 'Meeting for Sufferings' are mainly to watch the action of Parliament, to decide upon applications to preach in foreign parts, to aid charitable efforts of the brethren, and to issue good advice and caution to the society when needful."]

LANCASHIRE LINGO.—A young gentleman, the son of a large landowner in the interior of Russia, had a strong desire to learn English, and this wish was at length gratified by his meeting with an Englishman in one of the towns over there, whom, through a considerable offer, he induced to pass a year in the family. This period enabled the brother and sisters to become tolerably well acquainted with the tongue. It was after when in St. Petersburg that he was much puzzled with the inquiry of "How he liked Lancashire?" "Lancashire! what was that, he didn't quite know." "Had he never been to England?" "No!" "Well, but where did he learn English, then?" This was all explained, and he was hardly gratified to find that the family had acquired English with a beautifully broad Lancashire accent. Subsequently it transpired that the tutor was a Lancashire man over in Russia on some business connected with an improvement in the gear of railway engines.

MR. DISRAELI ON GARDENING.—Mr. Disraeli, addressing a village audience at Hughenden, said: A garden is to a working man a source of profit, a source of comfort, and a source of pleasure. It is a source of profit when it enables any individual to pay his rent by selling his fruit. It is a source of comfort when it allows him to lay up for his family a stock of potatoes, or to supply them with green winter stuff, which will carry them fairly through the year; and it is a source of pleasure to him when it produces flowers which charm his eye with beauty of colour and harmony of form. There are few things which can contribute more to the happiness of a man than the creation and cultivation of a garden. I will not give a lecture on cottage gardening on the present occasion, although I take great interest in the subject, but I will lay down one principle which is of great importance, because it applies to the present moment, and because those who hear me may be influenced by what I say, and it is, that in cottage gardening autumnal cultivation is the first point. If your garden is well cultivated, and if it is prepared in a proper manner, it is impossible, either in the plenteousness or the quality of your crops, to conceive what may be the result. Remember that autumn commenced about eight-and-forty hours ago, and that summer ended on the 22nd of September, and this is the moment when you must dig and trench, and accumulate manures, and it is upon the autumn cultivation that your success will depend when you claim our prizes next year. I must, however, say that I think too many potatoes are grown. Knowing well the value and importance of the stock of potatoes, I think there are other garden stuffs which might be found equally advantageous, but which are somewhat neglected. With regard to flowers, I should have liked to see more products of that description, but I know there is an impression that it is an expensive thing to cultivate flowers. Now, I will say that this is a very great error. There is nothing so cheap as to institute a flower garden. In the first year there might indeed be a very slight expenditure in seeds, but in the next year you help each other, and exchange seeds and plants, and it is quite impossible to conceive how much may be effected in the garden by constant vigilance and industry. A friend of mine said that roses were expensive things. I told him that all he had to do was to plant some briars in November, and then, in the spring, if he would come to my garden or the garden of any other gentleman he might obtain buds and learn how to insert them in the briars, and in autumn he would find his garden full of the queen of flowers. Therefore, it is a mistake to suppose that indulging in the cultivation of flowers is expensive.

IMMIGRATION INTO NEW YORK.—The immigration into New York during 1871 amounted to 228,962 persons, or 16,792 more than in 1870. Of these immigrants 113,112 were from the United Kingdom, 84,298 were Germans, including 2,009 Hollanders, and 19,595 were Scandinavians. There were 62,500 immigrants from Ireland, and 4,836 from Wales.